

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objections and rejections in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 63-69, 71-85, 88-95, and 97-154 now are pending in the present application, with claims 63, 64, 88-90, 112, 113, 131-138, and 151-154 being independent.

By this Amendment, claims 70 and 96 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 63, 88, 89, 91, 112, 131, 133, 134, and 136 have been amended and claims 151-154 are newly added. Support for the amendments and for the new claims can be found in the original application, as filed. No new matter has been added.

Initially, Applicants note that claims 64, 66, 67, 90, 92, 93, 113, 115, 116, 132, 135, 137, and 138 have been allowed and that claims 65, 70, 91, 96, 114, 119, 142, 146, and 150 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. To that end, the features of claim 70 and 96 have been incorporated into claims 63 and 89, respectively, and claims 70 and 96 have been cancelled. Applicants submit that independent claims 63 and 89 are thus allowable. In addition, claims 112, 131, and 134 have been amended to include features similar to those recited in claims 70 and 96. For this reason, Applicants submit that independent claims 112, 131, and 134 also are allowable.

In the Office Action, claims 63, 68, 69, 71-85, 88, 89, 94-95, 97-112, 117, 118, 120-131, 133, 134, 136, 139-141, 143-145, and 147-149 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,757,525 to Matthews et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,524,140 Klausner et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As amended herein, claim 88 recites a mail box facility for use with a telephony system, including a speech recognition user interface, control means, storage means, receiving means, reproducing means, and second storage means. The speech recognition user interface allows a user to input speech commands for controlling the mail box facility, and outputs a recognition result based on comparing the input speech commands with pre-stored reference models. The control means is responsive to the recognition result output from the speech recognition user interface, and controls the mail box facility in accordance with an input speech command. The storage means stores messages left by callers, when the users are unable to take the calls. The receiving means receives information of the callers via the speech recognition user interface. The reproducing means reproduces the messages left by the callers identified by the information received by the receiving means. The second storage means stores a pointer that points to a last message reproduced by the reproducing means.

Claims 133 and 136 recite a computer readable medium storing computer executable process steps for providing a mail box facility for use with a telephony system and computer executable program for providing a telephony system, respectively. These claims generally correspond to claim 88.

Thus, in each of independent claims 88, 133, and 136, messages left by callers are stored, information of the callers is received via a speech recognition user interface, the messages left by the callers identified by the information received by receiving means are reproduced, and a pointer points to a last message reproduced by reproducing means. With this novel combination, as discussed, for example, at least at page 115, lines 10-18 of the specification, a user can retrieve messages from individual callers from a mail box, using

the pointer stop the message retrieval to, for example, place a call, and then return to the message retrieval at the last message that was played. Applicants submit that at least these features are not taught or suggested by the cited patents, whether those patents are taken individually or in combination.

Matthews et al. relates to an electronic audio communications system with voice command features. Matthews et al. discloses an electronic communication system for the deposit, storage, and delivery of audio messages, and at column 27, lines 57-61, discusses how a vocabulary subset selector 603 provides pointers to all meaningful, legal responses among the vocabulary of generic command word templates 601. However, nowhere is Matthews et al. understood to teach or suggest at least that messages left by callers are stored, information of the callers is received via a speech recognition user interface, the messages left by the callers identified by the information received by receiving means are reproduced, and a pointer points to a last message reproduced by reproducing means, as recited generally in independent claims 88, 133, and 136.

Moreover, Klausner et al. is not understood to remedy the deficiencies of Matthews et al. Klausner et al. relates to a telephone answering device linking displayed data with recorded audio message, and describes a telephone answering device that includes means of organizing voice messages, associated codes such as personal IDs and home telephone numbers, and information stored in the memory of the telephone answering device. However, nowhere does Klausner et al. teach or suggest that messages left by callers are stored, information of the callers is received via a speech recognition user interface, the messages left by the callers identified by the information received by

receiving means are reproduced, and a pointer points to a last message reproduced by reproducing means, as recited in independent claims 88, 133, and 136.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants assert that claims 88, 133, and 136 patentably define over Matthews et al. and Klausner et al. whether those references are taken alone, or in combination. Withdrawal of the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

New claims 151-154 have been added to afford Applicants additional scopes of coverage. Applicant submit that new claim 151 corresponds generally to claim 138, which has been allowed, but omits the limitation that “said speech recognition user interface is adapted to recognize continuously spoken commands comprising at least one word defining a desired information service.” New claims 153 and 154 are apparatus and method claims, respectively, that relate generally to new claim 151. New claim 152 is a method claim that generally relates to allowed claim 137.

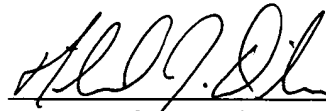
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants assert that each of the independent claims, namely, claims 63, 64, 88-90, 112, 113, 131-138, and 151-154, are allowable.

The remaining claims depend from one of the independent and are believed allowable by virtue of that dependency, and for reciting further patentable features of the invention. Favorable and individual consideration of the dependent claims are requested.

Applicants submit that the subject application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the subject application at the Examiner’s earliest convenience are solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C.
office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed
to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Didas", written over a horizontal line.

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